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ONTARIO

Monthly Bulletin

DEPARTMENT OF
GAME AND FISHERIES



RUFFED GROUSE (PARTRIDGE)

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Minister

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Deputy Minister

DEPARTMENT OF GAME AND FISHERIES

TORONTO - ONTARIO

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Minister in charge of Department

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Published to stimulate interest in the conservation of the Wild Life Natural
Resources of the Province of Ontario

VOLUME ONE

JANUARY, 1946

NUMBER THREE

Editorial

THE end of the war and a return to peace-time activities will doubtless bring many changes in our social and economic life. The co-operation necessitated by a common danger has emphasized the need for a greater interest in the welfare of a common humanity. As a nation we are in the happy position of having suffered little material damage, although the toll of physical suffering has been heavy. In the general scheme of post-war reconstruction there must be a reappraisal of values, both human and material. The resources of the Nation were fully utilized and proved their effectiveness in war, they have a peace-time value which, if properly appraised and used as efficiently, will secure for the Nation an economic future rich in material values, and a social standard worthy the sacrifices which have been made.

In this scheme of reconstruction and reappraisal our wild life resources will assume a new value because—by reason of the many industries with which they are allied—they are now an important item in our total economy. As a recreational medium, however, they have a value which surpasses their material worth. Fishing and hunting are the sports of the masses as well as the classes. They have a wider appeal and a greater following than any other sports. They are participant, as opposed to spectator or competitive sports, such as hockey and baseball, and their appeal is not restricted to bag or creel limits. As an asset to national health they occupy a ranking position, and as a character building influence have much to commend them. In addition to these, however, they are an important factor in the development of that initiative and resource which characterized our fighting sons. General Eisenhower echoed the sentiments and yearnings of a large majority of the men overseas when he said "let's get on with the war so we can all go home and go fishing".

At the beginning of a new year and on the threshold of a new era, it is fitting that we should remind ourselves of the true value of our heritage and resolve to co-operate with those whose business it is to preserve it in perpetuity.

Departmental History (continued)

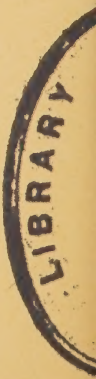
The Game Laws

Speaking of the period subsequent to the appointment of the Game and Fish Commission, in 1892, the Special Committee which reported on the Game situation in 1933 had this to say: "The decade or more years following the appointment of the Game and Fish Commission witnessed some advance in law enforcement, but little in the matter of law improvement." A summary of the Game Laws as enacted and amended in 1890, two years prior to the appointment of the Commission referred to above, gives an interesting basis for comparison with subsequent legislation. The deer was perhaps the most important game animal—close seasons having been established on moose, elk and caribou—but in the light of prevailing conditions, the regulations were extremely generous. An individual hunter might take a limit of five deer; two persons hunting together were limited to eight deer between them; three or more persons hunting together could take twelve deer for the party. The open seasons for upland game birds and water fowl varied, but all were long enough to satisfy the most exacting, and as a further example of the prevailing lack of control there was no mention of bag limits. There was a provision, however, that "they may be exposed for sale for fifteen days, and no longer, after such periods, and may be had in possession for the private use of the owner and his family at any time, but in all cases the proof of the time of killing, taking or purchasing, shall be on the person so in possession." The exception to this provision was that the purchase or sale of quail was forbidden. It will be evident that the lack of suitable restrictions had a great deal to do with the general waste and extravagance of the period. So far as Ontario was concerned the elk, the caribou and the wild turkey had already passed out of the picture, and the demands on other species were heavy.

The fishery laws in force at the same time as the game laws referred to above were almost wholly concerned with fishing leases and licenses, and the regulation and protection of the fisheries in waters covered by same.

"A fishery lease," according to the legal definition, "shall be held to include and mean a lease or instrument conferring for a term therein mentioned upon the lessee therein named the right to take and keep, for the purpose of fishing, under and subject to the provisions of the Act and of all regulations made thereunder, the exclusive possession of any Crown Lands therein described, with the exclusive right to fish in any waters flowing over or covering the same at such time and in such manner, and with such restrictions and subject to such regulations as may be permitted, regulated or prescribed by any lawful authority in that behalf."

A fishing license was described as "a license granting for the time therein mentioned, to the licensee therein named, upon payment of the license fee therein stipulated, a right to fish in any waters flowing over



or covering ungranted Crown Lands therein described, at such time, in such manner and with such restrictions and subject to such regulations as may be permitted, regulated or prescribed by any lawful authority in that behalf, but no fishing license shall be deemed to be, or be construed to operate as or in the nature of a lease or demise."

In the case of leases, the Act required the Commissioner to fix an upset price for the exclusive rights granted therein, and they were then disposed of to the highest bidder, after having been put up to public competition, through notice given in the Ontario Gazette, "and such other way as to the Commissioner may seem the most advantageous." If not sold by this means they could be disposed of by private sale at the upset price, or for a greater sum. Five years was the maximum term of any lease and the rent was paid annually in advance.

The Commissioner was authorized to grant permits "to fish in any waters adjoining Crown Lands not under lease for a period not exceeding one month, upon such terms and subject to such restrictions and conditions as shall be provided by order of the Lieutenant-Governor in Council to that effect."

According to the Fishery Regulations arising out of the provisions of the Act: "No person shall, except under authority of a fishery lease, fishing license, or permit, fish for, catch or kill any fish in any inland lake, river or stream adjoining the ungranted lands of the Province." All of which is more or less confusing, but it is noted that the non-resident was required to procure "a license or permit" before beginning to fish, at a fee of \$5.00. Leases have ceased to be part of administrative policy and resident licenses are only required for commercial fishing.

The open seasons for angling were as follows:

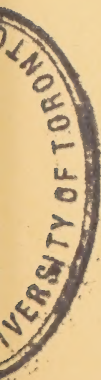
Speckled Trout — May 1st to September 15th.

Pickereel — May 15th to April 15th.

Bass, Maskinonge — June 15th to April 15th.

There were apparently no bag limits so the opportunity for needless destruction was unconfined.

Subsequent to the receipt of the Commissioners' report covering the enquiry of 1890 an Act amending the prevailing Act was passed in 1892. This is the Statute which placed control of the fisheries under a five man Commission, and which has been previously referred to. Apart from the shift in control, it contains few drastic changes. It does place a limit on the take of bass and trout but with certain reservations. In regard to bass the Act reads: "No tourist or summer visitor shall take or catch or kill in any Provincial water or carry away a greater number than one dozen bass caught or taken in such waters upon any one day." Tourist or summer visitor is defined as "all persons who may, during the spring, summer or autumn months be temporarily visiting, boarding or lodging in any locality at a distance of over five miles from their usual place of residence in other parts of the year." The limit on speckled trout was placed at fifty



or an aggregate weight of fifteen pounds. The taking of speckled trout, bass, pickerel and maskinonge was restricted to angling. Penalties for infractions were also stepped up, showing a determination to protect the resources.

A separate Act was passed at the same time entitled "An Act to amend the Act for the Protection of Game and Fur-bearing Animals." Part of this amendment details the creation of the Board of Fish and Game Commissioners and the extent of their powers thereunder. It also shows a tightening up in the restrictions applying to game and fur-bearing animals.

The first and most dramatic change was the establishing of a close season for deer between the fifteenth day of November and the first day of November of the following year. In other words the open season was reduced to a period of two weeks. The bag limit for the individual was reduced from five to two, and the killing of fawns was prohibited. Close seasons for small game were provided as follows:

| | |
|--|---|
| Grouse, pheasants, prairie fowl, wood- | } 15th of December to 15th of September |
| cock, snipe, rail, plover or any other | |
| game bird or animal (including black | |
| and gray squirrels and hares). | |

Quail — 15th December to 15th October

Swans or geese — 1st May to 15th September

Ducks — 15th December to 1st September

Limit on ducks, 300 per season

To the list of appliances prohibited in duck hunting was added "sail-boats or steam yachts," and the hunting day was restricted to the period between sunrise and sunset.

Another wise enactment was the prohibition of buying, selling or otherwise trafficking in quail, snipe, wild turkey, woodcock or partridge for a period of two years.

No license was required at this time by residents of Ontario or Quebec, but non-residents were required to provide themselves with a license at cost of \$25.00 for the season. In an endeavour to enforce this provision a very drastic method was adopted. By enactment it was provided that: "Every such person (non-resident) shall, on request by any person whomsoever within the Province, at all times, and as often as requested, produce and show to the person making the request, such license; and if he shall fail or refuse to do so he shall forfeit any such license he may possess, and shall if found hunting, taking, pursuing, killing, wounding or destroying any such animal or bird, or if on proof of the facts mentioned in the first sub-section hereof, and upon proof of such request and failure, or of refusal, be deemed to have violated the provisions of this section." As if to take the rough edges out of this unusual provision, it was further enacted that: "The Provincial Secretary, any member of the Board of Fish

and Game Commissioners, the Chief Fish and Game Warden or any of the Wardens may grant a permit to a guest of a resident of the Province free of charge for a term not exceeding one week."

This brief recital of the principal laws in effect at or about the time when sportsmen and others first began to realize the material value of the resources, and the fact that a great heritage was being sabotaged from within, provides a fitting background for a short summary of the progressive steps taken during the succeeding fifty years to build up what had been destroyed; to replenish what had been dissipated; and to protect and perpetuate the wild life of the Province.

(To be continued.)

The Deer Season

The deer hunting season is a thing of the past, and the big game nimrods have settled down again to the more prosaic things of life, while recalling happy memories of pleasant days spent in the bush, and social evenings replete with the wit and banter of congenial friends. Many no doubt obtained a deer, but for those who did not there were compensations, and few there were who failed to glimpse an elusive buck or doe bounding to safety in the swamp or tall timbers. It's an exciting moment, even for the old timers, when the white flag flashes and disappears just as suddenly, in an arc which suggests a tremendous leap.

However, the pleasures of the hunt are too well known to require any particular guilding and for the moment our discussion concerns the deer situation. It is difficult for us to present actual figures on the number of deer taken because these are not furnished by the hunters, and until such returns are mandatory under the conditions of the license our information must be gleaned in other ways. There is, first of all, the Highway Patrol, consisting of several field officers stationed at a strategic point on Highway No. 11, which checks all cars returning from the Northern Area. Believe it or not, this patrol has an arduous and somewhat exacting duty to perform. It meets and interviews thousands of hunters returning home at all hours of the day and night; checks licenses; sees that the bag conforms with the regulations; attempts to appease the disgruntled, and graciously accepts the commendations of the successful. In the course of its duty it seizes the odd deer illegally taken and issues the necessary words of warning and advice to those who try to flaunt the law.

Reports by this patrol suggest that more deer were killed and brought out than during the previous year. This is qualified by the fact that there was a very large increase in the numbers of resident and non-resident hunters. Almost every camp had a larger quota of hunters, and in some places temporary camps were established wherever facilities were available.

As is usual during the hunt some of the camps obtained a full quota of deer, others had to be satisfied with less, while the odd hunter had nothing but knocks, excuses or alibis. There was, for example, the party of fourteen enthusiastic nimrods who cheerfully pulled up at the checking

station and proudly displayed fourteen fine looking deer, and yet following them, after a brief interval, were two more or less disappointed hunters whose luck had completely run out, or whose patience and strategy were not equal to the occasion.

Reports from the eastern counties show that deer were reasonably plentiful and hunters greatly on the increase. In this area also, patrols were checking returning hunters and their experiences vary little from those on the north-south highway.

From other sections of the Province reports are not complete, but a newspaper item dated Fort Frances, October 28th, about two weeks after the season opened, stated that "in the past six days, 524 deer, 43 moose and 32 bears have been cleared through the customs by American nimrods hunting in Canada." This is claimed to be a record for this port of entry. It is safe to assume therefore that for the time being at least, the supply has been such as to take care of reasonable demands.

Avoid Out-of-Range Shooting

Nothing more distresses a good sportsman than to wound a deer and not be able to find it, or cripple a duck or other game bird and have them disappear when they are apparently within his grasp. It is not so much the loss of the game that annoys—for a miss would cause no concern—as the fact that the game has been injured and probably escaped only to die. This is of course a waste of the resources, and waste is obnoxious to the conservationist.

This crippling of game, however, is not an unusual experience in the hunting field. Some of the losses involved are unavoidable, but in the case of wildfowl and upland game birds particularly, a large part of these losses could be eliminated if hunters would remember the effective range of their guns, and not attempt to kill outside that range. This shooting beyond effective range is seldom intentional. It is mostly the result of over-enthusiasm or inexperience, or merely a lack of judgment when it comes to gauging distance.

The average shotgun shell has about 250 pellets in each charge, and it would be a waste of game to destroy it at such close range that the major portion of this load smeared the carcass. On the other hand it is just as futile to attempt to kill at such a distance that only a very small proportion of the shot reaches the objective—because of natural spread—and these without sufficient penetrating power to reach a vital spot. That this is a common occurrence is graphically illustrated by the following extracts from an article in *North Dakota Outdoors*:

"Examination of live-trapped ducks produced striking evidence that many hunters by attempting impossible out-of-range shots are not only wasting ammunition, but are crippling and wounding healthy birds.

"During spring banding activities, approximately 1,000 ducks were live-trapped and examined by use of the fluoroscope. It was found that

25% of them were carrying evidence of gun shot wounds—25%! Analysis of the data obtained from this group of normal flying birds, live-trapped after the hunting season had ended, showed that 81% of these ducks that had survived their wounds carried one or two shot pellets in their body as mute evidence of an experience with a gunner shooting at ineffective ranges. There was an average of 1.8 shot pellets per wounded bird."

What is the effective range of your gun? Most hunters are agreed that beyond sixty yards the kill is problematical, and it would be well to make that the limit, in order to prevent waste of ammunition and game. In a chart designed to show the hypothetical number of effective shot that could be placed in a 30 inch circle at various distances, the article already referred to, states that of "279 No. 6 chilled shot leaving a 12 gauge full choke shotgun 209 would be found in the target at 40 yards, 134 at 50 yards, and 93 at 60 yards." It will be seen that the spread between 40 and 60 yards is quite large and that the total is only one-third of the original total. Notice also that a 30-inch circle is a substantial target compared with a bird on the wing.

Long range shooting, therefore, involves two factors; a loss in effectiveness through spread of shot, and a decline in penetrating power in direct ratio to the distance from the target. It is true, that one or two well-placed pellets are sufficient to kill, but it is equally true that the greater the distance the less chance there is of attaining this goal.

The out-of-range shooter is very unpopular with the experienced duck-hunter. When the tyro blazes away at birds flying too high, or too far away for him to make a kill, he lessens the chances of others to get a within-range shot.

It is alleged that in the days of trench warfare, fighting men defending a position against impending attack were frequently urged to "reserve fire until you can see the whites of their eyes." Try it out, figuratively speaking when you are duck hunting or upland game shooting and note how your shooting improves.

Like Wildlife - - Like Man

Fred Everett

Great emergencies, like great emotions, create similar reactions in Wildlife and Man.

There should be one fundamental difference—Man's ability to control those reactions by virtue of his superior mental powers and his consciousness of morality, justice and the fitness of things.

There should be, but often Man fails to use those mental powers or heed his consciousness after the great emergency is over. Instead, like Wildlife, he gives way to animal instincts. Thus it becomes every one for

himself and the devil take the hindmost. In many respects, that is what happened after the first world war with the fathers of those fighting the war to-day.

Among Wildlife a great emergency filled with overwhelming danger, such as a forest fire or a raging flood, creates fear; a fear that obliterates all love or hate or hunger or competition among the species. In their hour of need, Wildlife huddles together, seeking safety and protection in each other's company. The Lion and the Mouse, the Wolf and the Lamb, turn to each other in mutual tolerance.

Like Wildlife; Like Man!

In the first world war and this war, Man was drawn together by a great fear of impending danger. The mighty and the weak, the rich and the poor, nations of different faiths and ways of life, men of all colors, races and creeds. All huddled together, seeking safety and protection in each other's company. The Father then, the Son now. Like Father; like Son.

Some years ago, to study fish and their reactions, I built a big pool and divided it into many sections of different depths and sizes, using stones for partitions. In it I placed many kinds and sizes of fish.

Very soon each fish, by virtue of its abilities, had claimed a section as its home. It fought any fish which came near. It was an individualist and isolationist.

Often I created a great emergency by draining the pool. As the danger of lowering waters threatened, the fish lost their isolationism and sense of ownership. They all gathered together in mutual fear and swam around and around in the lowering water until at last they were all confined in the deepest pool. There was no fighting—only a huddling together so long as lowering waters created fear.

Then I would close the outlet and start filling the pool again. The danger would be past. For a few moments, the fish seemed to be breathing hard, recovering from their fear. All at once the biggest fish would turn on those near it, as though bitterly blaming them for the danger. The next pool became a boiling turmoil of crazily fighting fish.

As the waters rose in the pool, the mightiest fish drove all others from the best spots and once more became an individualist, lord of all it could grab out of the chaos. By the time the pool was filled again each fish once more had become master of its own little section. The emergency had brought no change in their world. Isolationism and self-sufficiency were again supreme. Because they did not have brain power, the same thing happened over and over again with each emergency.

After the first world war, the end of the great emergency for the Father of to-day's Son, it was—Like Wildlife; Like Man!

After this war, will the Son make use of his superior mental powers and his consciousness of morality, justice and the fitness of things?

Or will it be—Like Father; Like Son?

Let us hope and pray for morality and justice and the fitness of things!

Pennsylvania Angler.

Two Partridges With One Shot

R. G. Sheppard

(Game and Fisheries Overseer)

A few hundred years ago the perpetuation of Wildlife was a personal enterprise, more or less. Conservation laws were most severe, inconsistent accordingly. Imagine Henry VIII sitting down to a great pudding or pie of lark's tongues. Next day perhaps, for added spice, personally directing the hanging of a poaching rogue for taking a pair of rabbits from the Royal Preserves. Even in this day many of us are prone to delicacies without proper discrimination, but we hope without such extremes as the destruction of many small birds for their tongues.

If lark's tongues were even half so good as partridge I can readily understand Henry's weakness, because I find our open season far too short a time to warrant a worthy number of these birds for one full dinner. Perhaps you are already decided that I am not a good wing-shot. That is so—but down in your heart doesn't this apply to anyone who hunts this illusive bunch of feathers in Southern Ontario. One often wonders if this lovely sprite of a bird is only clever accidentally, because he is most foolish sometimes, and fortunately, or I would secure none. But even when he seems most dumb you must have a ready and steady hand to catch a shot after the boom of his jump and in the vagaries of his first take-off flight. The strangest of all experiences I have had while hunting these birds, happened during the past open season in October.

It was a warm afternoon with poor visibility because of soft fine rain. I stopped my car adjacent to a bit of woods. As I climbed the roadside fence, I heard the booming jump of two partridges almost simultaneously on the farthest side of the kopje. I knew that I was too far off to have been the reason for their flight. Could it be that another hunter was here before me? I quickly slid to the ground and loaded my gun. In a matter of seconds, I saw three birds coming directly to me. One bird was flying above but making repeated dives, first at one, and then at the other of the two birds below. When sufficiently near, I had the good fortune to shoot one down. My shot sent one of the remaining birds in a high banking turn which it failed to complete, because it was literally dive-bombed out of the air by the pouncing bird above. They fell to the ground together only a few feet distant with one on top tearing viciously at the other with talon and bill. In my excitement I did not think about shooting again, but ran quickly to the spot. Almost instantly I saw the back feathers dis-

appearing from the bird beneath, and a single claw stroke sever the head from its body. Just then I was able to strike at the bird of prey with the muzzle of my gun which served to put it to flight, and I found myself in possession of two partridges, with only a single shot.

The falcon which gave me such able assistance was apparently a small species of hawk, no longer than a grouse. Its body was a dark brown with dark yellow under feathers about the same shade as those found on the underwing coverings of the flicker. Perhaps I should have had the presence of mind to shoot before it escaped, but I was too amazed and too desirous of securing the partridge before its flesh was torn beyond use. The episode makes one wonder whether or not partridge scarcity is owing so much to modern sporting weapons in the hands of men. In my experience I've never observed any sportsman who was as sure on a wing shot as that bird. One cannot help but wonder at the extent of destruction by these small hawks, the number of them, and how often one would need to make such kills for food?

Deer Feeding

Supplementing a brief reference in a previous issue regarding Colorado's attempt to winter feed its deer herd we herewith submit details of that experiment in the following article from a recent issue of *Colorado Conservation Comments*. (Editor.)

For the past decade Colorado has been committed to the policy of feeding great numbers of deer each winter on milled alfalfa and other concentrated stock foods. This winter feeding practice undeniably grew up as a result of compassion for the "poor little deers" wading deep snow out in the cold, mingled with a great deal of ignorance regarding their winter feeding habits. Through our systematic feeding practices we have coaxed many of them down to civilization for "handouts". Like some human beings many of the deer "fell for the idea" of getting something for nothing, and formed habits that have eventually changed their whole plan of existence.

In some parts of the State many deer now head down toward the feeding grounds as soon as the first snows come in late fall or early winter. Thousands upon thousands of them have died of slow starvation on the feed-grounds with their bellies full of food admirably suited to domestic livestock—but not to deer whose natural food is live browse. Unless there is an adequate supply of natural browse adjacent to the feed grounds the deer seem to be unable to survive more than about two and a half or three months of this brand of kindness.

Without a doubt there are occasionally times when the snow on the winter ranges is extremely deep or heavily crusted when there is actual need for helping out by supplementary feeding for a short period. Those responsible for game management should be prepared for such emergencies. In many states this emergency ration is provided by cutting down aspen, cottonwood, fir, juniper, and other trees and shrubs, as supple-

mentary browse, to tide them over the "hump". In Colorado occasional feeding of alfalfa might be justified in the sage brush areas for a few days or weeks at a time; but certainly not as a regular systematized winter practice. If not fed systematically Colorado's Mule Deer will distribute themselves over hundreds of thousands of acres of sage brush and other natural browse, avoid heavy concentration, and come through relatively hard winters with less loss than customarily results from continued feeding with the best artificial feed available.

In addition to the fact that these dry feeds, upon which domestic stock thrive, are not suitable as deer diet, the practice of feeding encourages large concentrations of deer on comparatively small areas. Hundreds and sometimes even thousands of them are brought together on a single feed ground. Nature's way of dealing with them is to keep them widely separated into small bands where epidemics have little chance to spread and where they are sufficiently exposed that predators may remove the weak and infected before great damage can be done. On the feed-grounds they mull over the saliva from each other's mouths, breathe each other's breath, and jostle each other at close enough quarters to exchange vermin. Those that survive this "hothouse" environment come back next year and bring their progeny with them until eventually whole areas have accepted W.P.A. as the only vocation available when winter sets in. Who knows that "rustling" for winter food may some day be a lost art.

Winter deer feeding is not practiced in every area of the State and old timers tell us that in the early days the population of deer was many times as great as it is now—in spite of bobcats, coyotes, mountain lions and other predators. It must be borne in mind, in this connection, that before lands were fenced and cultivated there was infinitely more winter range available—and that it is unreasonable to expect such vast populations so long as man continues to appropriate the natural resources to other uses.

Although most of the Mule Deer customarily migrate in Winter to the lower altitudes where there is less snow some remain in the deep snow areas and keep trails tramped around, and through, their favourite browse. This practice is termed "yarding." The trails may become as deep as a deers back, but still they manage to get to their favourite foods within a limited area. Many of these areas are occupied by no more than three or four deer, and very few of them by more than twelve to eighteen deer. Practically all wildlife management specialists are now agreed that deer are much better off where they are allowed to seek their own winter food in the way nature apparently intended them to do it.

Even though Colorado's winter deer feeding programme has been prompted by the most humanitarian motives the past four or five years of intensive research has quite clearly demonstrated that the winter foods customarily used for domestic livestock are only poor makeshifts for an animal whose year-round, natural diet consists of living browse. The high mortality rate on the feed grounds is the best evidence that the feeding practices have proven uneconomical; both in terms of herd conversation and in the expenditure of funds that could well be devoted to other

uses. Winter census surveys have shown that at no time have more than about 50 per cent of the deer of drainages adjacent to feeding grounds, taken advantage of feed offered, and at no time have the losses been as great among the animals depending on natural browse for all or most of their food.

The Yellow Perch

The other day we received a letter from a young man making certain enquiries concerning the habits of the yellow perch, which will probably be of interest to others of our readers. It seems that well into November he, and several other enthusiastic anglers, had been getting fairly good catches of perch in relatively deep water off the dock in his home town. Very many of these fish he noted were full of spawn and as he understood the perch was a spring spawner he was somewhat perturbed at this phenomenon. Before explaining this particular phase of the perch life we take the opportunity of making a few general comments on the perch itself.

The yellow perch (*Perca flavescens*) is without doubt one of the most abundant and widely distributed of our fishes. It is to be found in almost every lake and good sized stream from one end of the Province to the other. Its peculiar shape, and golden yellow sides with dark bars, is familiar to everyone who likes to fish. While it is not considered a game fish, it is an important addition to game fish waters because it may be taken with almost any type of bait and by the most inexperienced. It is usually the first fish to be taken by the angler in the spring and the last in the fall; in fact it may be caught all winter if one is enthusiastic enough to brave the rigors of fishing through the ice. As a food fish it has few peers, particularly when taken from cold water.

The perch is a spring spawner, and deposits its eggs earlier than most other species. With specific reference to the enquiry about the condition of the fish in the fall we quote from a treatise on *The Habits of the Yellow Perch*, by Pearse and Achtenberg. "After a perch attains sexual maturity the gonads in both sexes pass through a regular cycle of seasonal changes. After spawning is completed, the gonads remain small until late summer and then increase very rapidly in size for a month or more. By September they are almost as large as in the spring. The growth of the gonads, then, takes place for the most part in the summer, when food is most abundant, and there is little change in size during the winter months. By November, perch caught in deep water (18 to 20m.) will often shed eggs when brought to the surface. Such individuals are, of course, not completely 'ripe' but emit eggs on account of the decrease in pressure."

Sportsman and Farmer Relationship

"We don't mind hunters going over our property, but we do object to their shooting near our buildings and poultry pens." "Many of the hunters, when requested not to shoot near buildings become insolent and keep right on shooting."

(Complaint of farmers at sportsmen's meeting—News item dated December 22, 1945.)

Since the days of Magna Charta and the Common Law there has seldom been any difference of opinion as to the title to, or ownership of game. Where there have been disputes the courts have clearly laid down the dictum that wild life belongs to the Crown in trust for people. This right was not easily won, in fact it was only after years of bitter struggle and oppression that the Kings of England gave up their "divine rights, and personal prerogatives" for a more democratic system of government which substituted State ownership for regal control.

The administration of this heritage is not an easy one and has become more difficult as civilization progresses. There are several factors involved and these are important. In the natural development of the country public lands have been transferred to private ownership and with the title to these lands went the right to prevent public encroachment. In the southern or settled part of the Province this factor is one fraught with difficulties. On the one hand there is a valuable public resource which is available for use under certain regulations governing the taking of game; and on the other hand there is the land-owner, upon whose land the resource is to be found, with the right to refuse entry upon his lands for the purpose of reducing the game to possession.

The background of the problem is simple. Game temporarily on private lands, is at the best but a transitory part of the land, and the farmer has no ownership rights in it. Yet, by exercising his property rights he can prevent the sportsman from obtaining possession of the game while it is still upon his land by refusing access thereto.

Having made this point clear it is pertinent to add that Ontario sportsmen have for generations been privileged to enjoy a large measure of freedom to pursue their sport over private lands. Farmers have for the most part been neither vindictive nor assertive. They have co-operated in a very pleasing way and only when privileges have been abused through destruction of property, or the careless use of firearms has there been prohibitive action. Because of this fact many sportsmen have assumed that what they were enjoying was a right, rather than a privilege, and as a consequence have not always behaved with that respect for private property which the farmer is entitled to expect.

Within the past two decades or so, there has been a steady increase in the number of hunters, while available hunting territory has tended to decrease. Actual figures on the general increase over a twenty year period are not available, but in 1933 the gun license was made applicable to the whole of the Province—previously it had only been necessary in certain sections—and from the returns for the intervening ten years it is possible to get some idea of the increasing popularity of the sport. The number of licensed hunters for 1933 was 97,491 while the figures for 1942 were 115,667, an increase for the period of 18,176. It should be noted, however, that for three years of that period the Nation was at war, and thousands

of hunters and prospective hunters were in the armed services overseas. Since the end of the war, and the availability of ammunition, the sale of gun licenses has again soared to a new high.

This growing army of sportsmen means that good game areas are subjected to more intensive hunting and as the numbers increase so does the tendency to create irritation between the hunters and the farmer. A large percentage of the farmers are themselves hunters and have no objection to the reasonable use of their lands by other hunters. However, this privilege must be respected, for the friendly hospitality which exists demands a proper regard for the rights involved. The petty annoyances which lack of consideration can inflict frequently result in posted lands.

Legally posted lands are of course the bug-bear of the sportsman. They not only curb his sport, but they suggest a lack of good-will between two classes whose co-operation is very necessary to their mutual welfare. Think it over Mr. Sportsman and you will readily see that in the agricultural and industrial section of the Province, the farmer holds the key to much of your local hunting activities. That being so, everything possible should be done to enlist his co-operation and cultivate his good-will. This may readily be done by friendly contact, by protecting his property and by refraining from doing anything while upon his lands which might conceivably cause irritation. Play the game and the game will be available to play with.

Aquatic Warfare

The greed and selfishness of nations and individuals and the warped idea that wits and guile, however illegally employed, are legitimate means to an end, are the cause of much of the suffering to which humanity is heir. Nationally, these traits are the underlying reasons for most wars; individually they are the factors responsible for much of our social unrest.

There is seldom any clear cut justification for war; in the struggle just concluded there was not even an excuse for it. It was inspired by an insane desire for power and a perverted sense of human status and relationship. Its slogan was the survival of the fittest, and there was no doubt in the minds of the Axis leaders that they occupied the driver's seat. This idea of might being right is simply a reversion to nature, a descent from the ideal to the primeval, for it places man and his aspirations in the same category as the beasts of the field and all forms of aquatic and insect life.

In the case of wildlife, Nature has provided a ruthless code which is part of her scheme for perpetuation. It is particularly savage in our so-called game fish. Many of these like the bass, pike, pickerel and musky are extremely voracious, even to the extent of cannibalism, and have an almost insatiable hunger for live food.

Life in the water is a continual war of conquest; a perpetual struggle for existence against superior strength in which the fittest and the wary

alone survive. The difference between this water warfare and the wars of nations is that the one is essential, while the other usually lacks any substance either in reason or necessity.

The intensity of the war for existence among fish life depends upon the size of the water area and the amount of food available. Where the area is small, the food supply limited and the population dense, the small fish of every species will be ruthlessly sought and decimated by the more aggressive game fish. Where the area is large the struggle is not so intense, and the small fish have a better chance of escaping their enemies.

The bass is a great fighter, as every angler will readily admit. From the time it has emptied the yolk sack which provides its first food, it is a prospective killer and begins to cultivate a taste for live food. It is not particular whether it consumes minnows, or the young of its own species. You probably have seen a male bass guarding its nest and young from other predaceous fish. Under such conditions it betrays a paternal instinct which is commendable, and it is swift to attack and drive away any intruders. During this period it eats very little, but this only serves to build up its appetite. After it leaves the nest its paternal interest subsides and being ravenous for food it frequently raids its own brood stock with disastrous effect.

Regular observation of bass fingerlings in rearing ponds show that in almost every group there are some which immediately develop cannibalistic tendencies and begin devouring the other members of the group. These tiny cannibals soon out-strip their brothers in growth, and, having tasted the soft appetising flesh so readily available, rapidly become a menace to the others.

The bass is well equipped for its part in the struggle. It is a born fighter, quick in its movements, with a tough skin and heavy dorsal fin. For these reasons it is able to protect itself with reasonable effectiveness, when it has reached the adult stage, while creating havoc in the ranks of the forage fishes.

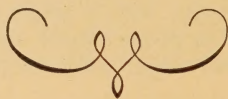
The pike, and musky are equally voracious; the pike being extremely aggressive. Its technique is simple but effective. It lurks among the weed beds, more or less concealed, and waits for its victims to come within range. Then with a savage rush, and a surprising amount of speed for a big fish, it darts at its prey. By instinct the pike is a lone hunter, and by dodging among the weeds it finds plenty of food among the schools of minnows and other fish which frequent these areas. Many an unsuspecting duckling has been pulled under and devoured by this guerilla fighter.

A speaker at the seventh North American Wildlife Conference held in Toronto in 1942, discussing the duck situation related that he witnessed the setting of a gill net in northern Canadian waters. When raised it contained 25 pike, and in the stomachs of these were found 11 muskrats and 10 ducklings. In one pike there was one muskrat and one duck, and in another pike there were two ducks.

The musky, like the pike, has a tremendous appetite and lives almost entirely on live food. One of the chief difficulties facing the fish culturist in raising muskies artificially beyond the fry stage is the fact that from the time that they require food they must be constantly supplied with live minnows, and as they grow the demand for food naturally increases. A few thousand ravishingly hungry muskies will consume an enormous daily total of live minnows, and it is exceedingly hard to regulate the supply to meet the demand. The musky is referred to as the "tiger of the north" and its disposition and general appearance show the aptness of the reference.

It should be noted, however, that in the scheme of Nature provision is made for retaining a proper balance despite the decimation which takes place. Reproduction of each species is of such extensive proportions—thousands of eggs being produced by many parent fish during each spawning period—that control is absolutely necessary. Predation is Nature's way of exercising that control, and of assuring perpetuation and development of the surviving species.

This perpetual warfare which exists in all water areas where fish are to be found presents a fascinating study. The ruthlessness of game fish which is part of their nature, adds considerably to their value as sporting fish. They are "game" because they are fighters. They live in a grim world which Nature has decreed shall be self-sustaining and the struggle to survive contemplates the development of the strong at the expense of the weak.



Fly Tying

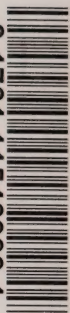
My table is littered with feathers and silk
Of various colours and shades,
There's fur from the rabbit, the squirrel and the deer,
And scissors with delicate blades.
A small pair of tweezers, a vise and some wax,
And varnishes glossy and white.
There's hooks of all sizes and shapes in a box
And tinsil all shining and bright.

With these things I fashion the delicate flies
While out-doors the winter winds blow,
As I sit there and work in glow of the light
I think of the places I know.
How sunshine turns silver on rippling streams,
How evening turns silver to gold.
The tint of water o'er moss covered stones
And trout that the amber pools hold.

A Cahill I'll make for deep glossy pool,
The home of a grumpy old brown;
And a small Gordon Quill a brookie to take
At Rock Pool where white waters frown.
This one to the rainbow that rose to my fly
And fought with abandon and skill
And lost, to his memory I fashion again
His favourite, Dark Ginger Quill.

And so the whole evening I sit in my chair
There dream of the battles of yore,
And see in my mind the tall pines and the streams
And listen to white waters roar.
These pleasures I know though it's winter outside,
What more could a fisherman wish?
And so I can say though its often been said,
"There's much more to fishing than fish."

A. G. Shimmel
in Pennsylvania Angler.



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